

AETC News Clips



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26 Oct 01

Dropping of rations for Afghans is both altruistic and political

Sig Christenson

Express-News military writer

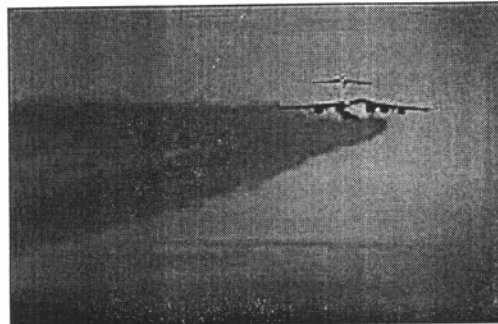
Web Posted: 10/26/2001 12:00:00 AM

ABOARD "THE SPIRIT OF THE AIR FORCE" — The C-17's rear door opens high above Afghanistan, and 42 1,000-pound boxes packed with humanitarian rations rumble out, each cardboard casing virtually exploding as it hits the minus-40-degree air.

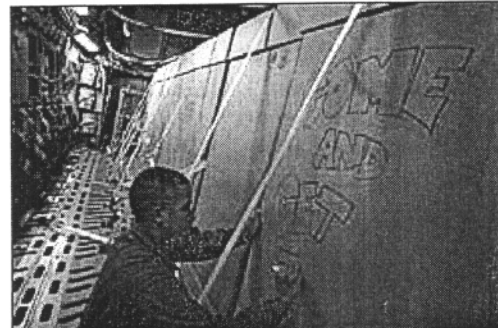
Eight seconds later, the main part of the mission is complete. About 37,500 Humanitarian Daily Rations begin dropping into troubled northern Afghanistan to feed thousands of hungry refugees.

It's a practice that's now as much a part of U.S. war strategy as is its relentless bombing campaign.

As America wages war on the Taliban, it's also engaged in a battle for the loyalties of hungry Afghan refugees — what British Prime Minister Tony Blair has called a campaign of bombs and bread.



A U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo jet loaded with humanitarian rations heads for northern Afghanistan.



Physiological technician Steve prints a message saying 'come and get it' on a load of food set to be dropped over northern Afghanistan from a C-17 based in Ramstein, Germany.

John Davenport/Express-News Photos

The effort is both altruistic and political — aimed in part at

Express News
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undermining support for the Taliban and Osama bin Laden.

"I don't think they're (Afghans) going to be so loyal (to the Taliban) as time goes on," said Tim, an Air Force staff sergeant on the flight. Last names were withheld for security reasons.

"As they understand where these supplies are coming from, they'll realize the United States is definitely friendly towards them," he said.

But winning the war, some fear, may be easier than preventing widespread starvation during the upcoming harsh winter months in Afghanistan.

The battered country faces a major famine after 22 years of war, three years of severe drought and five years of Taliban rule.

As many as 7 million Afghans, almost a third of the country's population, could go hungry this winter, according to estimates by the United Nations Food Program.

Many advocates for Afghan refugees, including the U.N. Food Program, welcome the American airlift. Francis Mwanca, a spokesman with the U.N. World Food Program in Rome, said Thursday the program is augmenting his group's efforts.

The United Nations is trucking 2,000 tons of food each day into Afghanistan and considering air drops in some areas because they soon will be difficult to reach by ground.

"Any assistance that goes into help people (who) are desperately, desperately in need is welcome," Mwanca said.

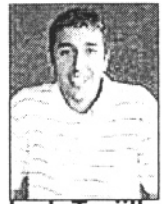
But even some who support the humanitarian missions fear the Air Force campaign won't do much to stave off the looming Afghan famine.

The dropped rations will feed fewer than 1 percent of hungry Afghans, noted former chief Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon, now president of Refugees International.

"We shouldn't delude ourselves into thinking this is the answer to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, because it's not," he said.

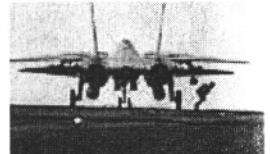
Several other international aid groups, including Doctors Without Borders and Oxfam, have been critical of the flights, labeling them more propaganda than humanitarian.

President Bush this month pledged \$320 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and neighboring countries.



Josh Trujillo,
Seattle Post
Intelligencer staff
photographer.

PHOTOS + GRAPHICS



United States Strikes Back



Afghanistan's Frontlines



On the Edge in Pakistan

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That includes \$25 million for a fund for refugees crossing from Afghanistan to bordering countries. Much of the U.S. money will be funneled into U.N. agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

America also has given more than \$1 billion in aid to help needy Afghans since 1979.

Still, the C-17 humanitarian airlift that began last month is a new and daring initiative in the ongoing aid effort.

Flying over potentially hostile portions of Afghanistan at night, the C-17s have dropped nearly 1 million daily rations in the past few weeks. Rather than landing the planes and off-loading the food, airmen help release boxes carrying the bright yellow rations while flying over pre-selected targets.

On this night, another C-17 laden with rations leads the way in front of the "Spirit of the Air Force," flown by the 437th Airlift Wing in Charleston, S.C. Both cargo jets made the grueling, almost-15-hour round trip from Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

The flight involved two in-air refuelings — the second of which occurred after the drop and took a half-hour because of slight problems.

Ramstein officials would not offer details on the planes' exact route or their altitude, citing security reasons. They also asked that the time of takeoff and landing be kept secret.

The airdrop over Afghanistan was brief but relatively perilous. Everyone on the plane was required to breathe pure oxygen, a tiring but necessary precaution designed to prevent potentially fatal altitude sickness.

With the cargo bay's bright florescent lights turned off, the crew members sat in seats along the fuselage, occasionally adjusting their masks and leaning against the 8-foot-tall cardboard boxes containing the rations.

Many of the boxes bore upbeat messages in thick black ink written by Staff Sgt. Steve, one of two physiologists on this mission. One physiologist was charged with watching over the crew, while another continuously checked on a San Antonio Express-News reporter and photographer.

It's risky flying over the northern portion of Afghanistan, where some Taliban forces are thought to have deadly, U.S.-made, Stinger surface-to-air missiles left over from their war with the Soviet Union. But Bacon said most of the Afghans in dire need of food are in that part of the country.

The danger and the possibility that Afghans may not even

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receive or like the food didn't dent the crew's enthusiasm.

"I would say that we've succeeded if we put the food where the planners have said they wanted it put," said the aircraft commander, Capt. Patrick.

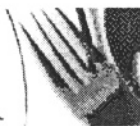
"If it was another country dropping bombs on us, and they were coming right behind and dropping food, that would win me over," said Senior Airman Bryan, a five-year Air Force veteran whose parents live in East Texas.

"It was an incredible experience up there," said Lt. Liz, who posted a small milestone in the conflict by becoming the first female C-17 pilot to enter the Afghan combat zone. "I've never seen anything like that before."

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Express-News: Military

Military spouses prepare for action

By René A. Guzman

San Antonio Express-News

Web Posted : 10/26/2001 12:00 AM

As the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks rained down on the nation, Victoria Klein tried to stay on the road. Stuck in her car that morning in San Antonio, she tuned in to the radio as it barked all sorts of hasty reports, updates and speculations.

Yet through that terrible noise, her mind raced elsewhere.

She thought of her husband, Xavier Klein, a 30-year-old medic for the Texas Army National Guard. Then her brother, Alejandro Garcia, a 25-year-old Army medic stationed at Fort Sam Houston. And she couldn't forget her brother-in-law, James, a 38-year-old Air Force Reservist. All military men. All duty-bound to serve their country in a time of need.

That time had surely come. But was Victoria ready?

"Before we even got married, I knew I was marrying a patriot," says Victoria, 26. "I knew if the time came he would be ready to serve his country.... Since the 11th, it's just been the waiting game, waiting for the phone call. Coming to realize it's not so immediate, but it could be."

Helpful resources

Dmoz.org

<http://dmoz.org/Society/Military/People/Spouses/>

Web links for military spouses and families of any branch.

SpouseNet.com

www.spousenet.com

Peer support for military spouses of all branches.

MilitaryCity.com

www.militarycity.com

From the military Times Publishing Group for Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines.

National Military Family Association

www.nmfa.org

Education, information and advocacy.

(703) 931-6632

Military Benefit Association

www.militarybenefit.org

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Send comments about this section to online editor Crystal Coleman.

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With the United States launching military assaults on suspected terrorist organizations in Afghanistan (and perhaps elsewhere around the world), thousands of military spouses now face the very real possibility of watching their loved ones march off into the shadows of America's new war on terrorism.

Focuses on financial security issues for military families.

(800) 336-0100

American Red Cross (San Antonio Chapter)

www.saredcross.org

Volunteering information and other updates for military families and civilians.

3642 E. Houston St.

It's a stark reality that hits too close to home. Since the terrorist attacks, almost 1,800 reservists from San

San Antonio, TX 78219-3830

(210) 224-5151

Antonio had answered "the call" at press time. Last month, the Pentagon ordered nearly 700 National Guardsmen and reservists from the city to active duty. On Oct. 16, the Pentagon called up another 1,082 reservists with the 433rd Airlift Wing at Lackland AFB to active duty.

Naturally, this raises some concerns in the minds of those married to the armed forces. When will it be *his* turn? When will he come back? *Will* he come back? Can I handle this?

Victoria acknowledges these worries sometimes haunt her — when she lets them.

"I just try so hard to be strong and not let my emotions overrun me," she says. "I'm making sure my husband knows he has my support."

Married on Valentine's Day 2001, Victoria spends most days writing or teaching, while Xavier helps manage an EZ Pawn in the Las Palmas shopping center. Since the attacks, Victoria says she and Xavier have just taken it one day at a time, focusing on her 6-year-old son, Francisco "Paco," and finding time for a quiet family dinner.

On Oct. 14, the family took an uneasy trip to the Texas Army National Guard armory in New Braunfels for family readiness and other predeployment presentations. There, the Kleins and other military families learned about all facets of deployment, from filing insurance policies to keeping up the oil in the family car.

Despite the brochures and practical advice, Victoria says it still doesn't prepare you for the uncertain emotional road that lies ahead: "Not at all. They certainly offer options like counselors, but if anything, I feel a great sense of responsibility to take care of things myself."

Carol Vandesteeg, a military wife for more than 20 years, says that feeling is all too common with military spouses.

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"To my knowledge, there's no such course for this," says Vandesteeg, 51, living at Randolph AFB where her husband, Ren, is stationed. "In today's military, it's not a matter of whether my spouse will be deployed. It's *when* will my spouse be deployed."

Vandesteeg found that out the hard way when her husband, an Air Force chaplain, got the call to Operation Desert Storm on Aug. 10, 1990. Carol recalls how on a quiet Monday morning, Ren stormed into the base pharmacy at McConnell AFB in Wichita, Kan., jarring her from her window station at work with the shocking news that he had to deploy in two hours.

In those two desperate hours, Carol somehow packed Ren's duffel bag, woke their older son, Dan, to pick up some razors from the Base Exchange, and got her husband to the Mobility Center in time to see him go off to God knew where. Two things he said made her heart skip a beat: "I can't tell you where I'm going" and "I love you."

Carol heard from Ren three weeks later, but it would be another six months before she would hear his voice in person.

The experience inspired her to write "When Duty Calls" (Winepress Publishing, \$12.99), a comprehensive guide for military families facing potential military separations. The text includes tips for making a family deployment guide and numerous phone numbers for all facets of military service and support.

As far as Vandesteeg is concerned, this has always been a big part of what active duty people live with. She cites in her book that while the military has been reduced by about 40 percent since 1990, deployment numbers have simultaneously increased by almost 400 percent (and that's prior to Sept. 11, 2001).

"The uncertainty of it is what makes it more intense," Vandesteeg says.

She notes in her book that as deployment day approaches, strained behavior should be expected. The husband might become totally preoccupied with work. The wife might blame him for not spending more time together before he leaves. The kids might misbehave more, or withdraw emotionally to hide their worry. These are normal responses to deployment, Vandesteeg says, and should be addressed openly, honestly and immediately.

And don't forget those ties that bind.

"Deployments can turn into being very romantic," says Meredith Leyva, a military wife for nearly five years. "Rely on the baby sitter and go out to dinner and a movie. Make up for lost time in advance so that way you do miss each other on deployment."

Leyva, 30, says she's emotionally prepared for her husband's deployment. For now, she's stationed with the Navy physician at Camp Pendelton, a Marine Corps base in north San Diego. But should the call come, she says
<http://news.mysanantonio.com/story.cfm?xla=saen&xlb=340&xlc=445674&xld=170>

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she'll take her support system beyond the base to the World Wide Web.

Leyva founded CinCHouse.com (short for "Commander in Chief of the house"), an online portal for military wives and military women in general. Besides offering chat rooms and online resources, she says the Internet helps keep many military families in touch no matter how often duty might keep them apart.

"I very strongly recommend that husband and wife have great e-mail programs," she says. "Many service members are able to talk on almost a daily basis, and that alleviates the problem of being out of touch."

Cyber support aside, Leyva says military wives typically find strength with fellow on-base wives, or through closer connections with their civilian friends and family.

Yet for many military spouses, saying welcome back can often be just as tough as saying goodbye. Leyva notes that spouses can become very independent over a period of six months (often the maximum time away for military personnel). "When the service member comes home the situation has changed so that the wife feels like he's intruding upon her life," she says.

When spouses return from deployment, they must readjust to home life, whether it's minor steps such as taking out the trash and helping with the laundry or the major steps of reconnecting with their children and their wives.

"You have to really make an effort to be romantic again with the hope of falling in love all over again," Leyva says. "We encourage wives to ask (their husbands) for help and share the chores and responsibility. You have to sit down and talk about it when he returns."

And for most military spouses, that return is all but guaranteed. Leyva doesn't even think about the possibility of her husband's death abroad, crediting her confidence in his skills, the nation's military and her own support system.

"We're extremely fortunate that deaths in action are extraordinarily rare," she says. "I'm really not that worried about the war in Afghanistan. We're the most technologically powerful and trained military in the world — especially when we go in with a military goal."

Yet for Victoria Klein, there's some extra insight.

"Certainly, my spirituality and faith is key," she says. "I just have this gut feeling. Call it women's intuition. I know that my brothers and my husband will come back to me."

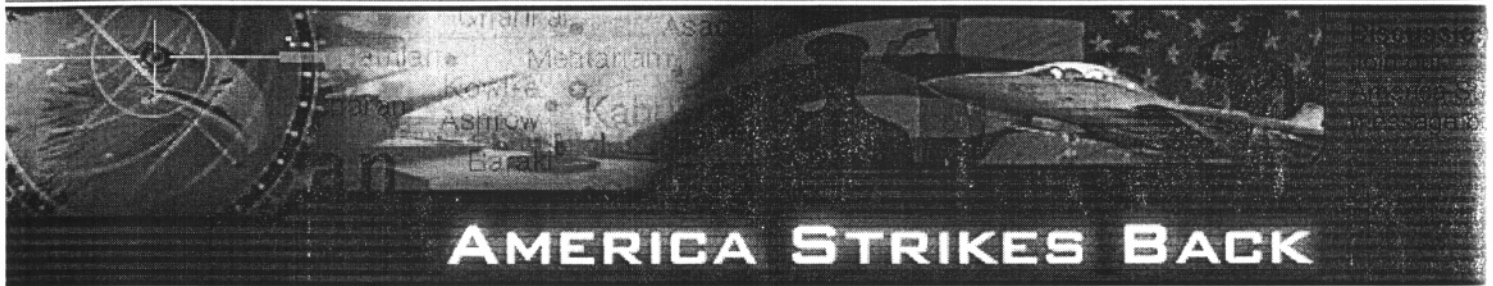
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10/26/2001





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City, county add plans of actions

David Hebert

KENS 5 Eyewitness News

Web Posted: 10/25/2001 05:13:53 PM

New city and county plans of action to handle anxieties over anthrax are in place.

Two special detox showers are in place in the basements of the Bexar County Justice Center and Bexar County Courthouse.

County officials said the showers have not been used, but they're ready, at a moment's notice.

The showers not only use only water, but also an intense pressure to clean people and their clothing.

"The showers are a precautionary measure we've taken here at the courthouse and the justice center in the event someone, an employee opens up an envelope, in case they are physically contaminated or a substance falls on them," said Deputy Chief Henry Martinez of the Bexar County Sheriff's Department.

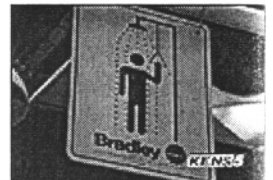
There are plans are to build at least two more mobile detox showers, in case several people have to be decontaminated.

The San Antonio Fire Department now has three different reconnaissance teams, a term usually reserved for military action.

Their job is to respond to anthrax scares and other biochemical calls and let the hazardous materials crews know whether or not they're needed.

Officials said there is plenty of activity to keep everyone busy.

VIDEO COVERAGE

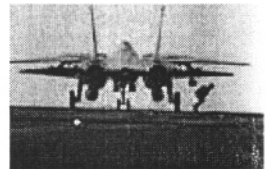


City, county have detox show ready if needed.



America Strikes Back
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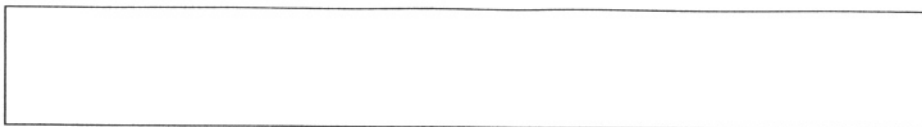
On the Edge in Pakistan

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Since Sept. 11, the fire department has responded to about 280 calls. Some of those involve some sort of white powder on a package or envelope. They've also had their hands full with bomb-scares — about 40 in the past few weeks.

SAFD Chief Robert Ojeda said none of these calls have involved any real danger. He's asking the public to use some discretion when it comes to calling for help, but adds he understands why all of this is happening and why the public seems to need a little reassurance.

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City of San Antonio Emergency Safety Plan

MySanAntonio.com

Web Posted : 10/08/2001 1:50 PM

In the event of an emergency, tune to WOAI 1200 AM

The City of San Antonio is providing the following information in an effort to encourage citizens to plan for unexpected emergencies. Families with school-age children should be familiar with their school's emergency plan. Although local officials do all they can to help, it is really up to you when it comes to the comfort and safety of your household.

HAVE THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES FOR ANY EMERGENCY:

If you need to evacuate your home or are asked to "shelter in place," having some essential supplies on hand will make you and your family more comfortable. Prepare a disaster supplies kit in an easy-to-carry container such as a duffel bag or small plastic trash can.

- Flashlights and extra batteries.
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries.
- First-aid kit.
- Emergency food supplies (non-perishable foods).
- Water (1 gallon per person, per day).
- Can opener (non-electric).
- Essential medicines.
- Cash and credit cards.
- Prescription eye wear.

TERRORISM:

Prepare to deal with a terrorist incident by adapting many of the same techniques used to prepare for other crises.
Be alert and aware of the surrounding area. The very nature of terrorism suggests that there may be little or no warning.
Take precautions when traveling.
Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior.
Do not accept packages from strangers.
Do not leave luggage unattended.
Learn where emergency exits are located.

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In an unfamiliar building be aware of your immediate surroundings including your closest exits.

Be aware of heavy or breakable objects that could move, fall or break in an explosion.

People who live or work in a multi-level building can do the following:
Review emergency evacuation procedures and know where fire exits are located.

Create an emergency communications plan with an out-of-town family member or friend that will be unlikely to be affected by the same emergency.

SHELTERING IN-PLACE:

If asked to stay indoors ("IN-PLACE SHELTERING"), seal your house so contaminants cannot enter. Close and lock windows and doors. Seal gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels and duct tape. Seal gaps around window and air conditioning units, bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans, and stove and dryer vents with duct tape and plastic sheeting, wax paper or aluminum wrap. Close fireplace dampers. Close off nonessential rooms such as storage areas, laundry rooms and extra bedrooms. Turn off ventilation systems.

FIRE:

Install smoke detectors (check them once a month and change the batteries at least twice a year). Make sure all family members know what to do in a fire.

Draw a floor plan with at least two ways of escaping every room and practice twice a year. Choose a safe meeting place outside the house. Call 911 from outside the house immediately. Learn to Stop, Drop, and Roll if clothes catch fire. Use the stairs (not elevators) to escape. If possible, cover mouth with a cloth to avoid inhaling smoke and gases. Close doors in each room after escaping to delay the spread of the fire.

DURING A FLOOD:

Indoors - Turn on battery-operated radio or television to get the latest emergency information. Get your pre-assembled emergency supplies. If told by the authorities to leave, do so immediately.

Outdoors - Climb to high ground and stay there. Avoid walking through any floodwaters. If it is moving swiftly, even water 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet.

In a car - If you come to a flooded area, turn around and use an alternate

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route. If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground. Many deaths have resulted from attempts to move stalled vehicles.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL ACCIDENT:

If caught at the scene of an accident - Move away from the accident scene and help keep others away. Do not walk into or touch any of the spilled substance.

Try not to inhale gases, fumes and smoke. If possible, cover mouth with a cloth while leaving the area. Stay away from accident victims until authorities have identified the hazardous materials as safe.

Try to stay upstream, uphill and upwind of the accident.

EVACUATION:

Authorities will determine if evacuation is necessary based on the type and duration of the incident. Other considerations are the length of time it should take to evacuate the area, weather conditions, and the time of day.

If evacuated: Stay tuned to a radio or television for information on evacuation routes, temporary shelters, and other procedures. Follow the routes recommended by the authorities--shortcuts may not be safe.

Shelters: Temporary shelters are schools, churches and other places of public assembly that are utilized during incidents requiring citizens to be evacuated from a specific area of San Antonio. Tune to radio and television for information on the nearest open shelter to your location.

If radio and television communications are disrupted, local emergency personnel will direct you as needed.

Take pre-assembled emergency supplies.

Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance such as infants, elderly people and people with disabilities.

Plan to take your pets with you; do not leave them behind. Because pets are not permitted in public shelters, follow your plan to go to a relative or friend's home, or find a location that will allow pets.

CALL 9-1-1 FOR ALL EMERGENCIES

10/08/2001

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Local agencies already had materials on hand

Hazmat gear bought with grant funds

By CINDY TUMIEL

EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

Anthrax anxiety has proven physically and emotionally taxing for local agencies, and the extra manpower required is putting a strain on their overtime budgets.

But the recent rash of emergency calls over suspicious powders and substances has done little to upset local capital budgets.

Thanks to federal grants, San Antonio already had made major capital investments to equip the Fire Department's Hazardous Material Response Team, which is responding to 10 times the normal volume of calls.

Similar capital investments also were made several years ago at the Metropolitan Health

District, which operates the disease surveillance laboratory for 46 South Texas counties.

The cost is negligible for lab materials — swabs, bags, disposable gloves and generally inexpensive chemicals to test whether the substances or materials contain bacteria, and whether those bacteria are anthrax.

But crews are working longer hours and are being diverted from other tasks to handle the onslaught of local calls that began this month when anthrax exposures were discovered in Washington, New York and Florida.

Since anthrax killed a Florida man this month, San Antonio firefighters and police have answered more than 800 calls from people reporting fears that the deadly bacteria had turned up in their homes or work places.

Officers have investigated every report and determined the suspicions either were unfounded or a hoax, officials said Thursday.

"We haven't had any sign of anthrax in Texas, much less here in San Antonio," Fire Chief Robert Ojeda told reporters at a news conference.

Police Chief Al Philippus said his officers picked up 194 envelopes and packages that residents reported as suspicious.

The Hazardous Material Response Team has made 303 calls, as opposed to 16 made in the same period last year, said Tommy Thompson, Fire Department spokesman.

With so many calls made to 911, the Fire Department keeps up to three additional hazmat technicians working 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily and earning overtime.

"It's money we've never had to spend before," Thompson said.

The health department has tested 250 items sent in by emergency response crews from San Antonio and elsewhere in South Texas, said Roger Pollok, director of the health department lab. None has tested positive for anthrax.

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Local agencies ... cont'd

"For the most part, the cost now is staff time," Pollok said. "I have the same amount of manpower now that I had before. I have staff that is working until 2 o'clock in the morning."

He estimated it cost the health department \$30 to \$35 for each basic laboratory culture, and most of that goes toward wages and benefits for lab technicians. It takes an hour or more to set up and process each culture for analysis, Pollok said.

Nine of those cultures needed a second, more sophisticated test, using fluorescent chemicals to make sure bacteria detected in the first screening were not anthrax.

The fluorescent dye is very expensive, Pollok said, but is provided to the local health department at no cost by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Still, he estimated taxpayers pay an additional \$50 each for those tests.

The city's hazmat crews normally try to recover their costs,

but these days they are racking up fees with no one to bill. It costs the city \$440 an hour for each vehicle used per incident, plus any materials used and any overtime pay.

"We have not billed anyone for this," Thompson said. "The fee is moot unless we catch the person who did it."

Usually, when the Hazardous Material Response Team cleans up an oil spill off the highway, or anything similar, the trucking or shipping company is fined to cover the department's services.

Few people have received medical care in connection with the anthrax reports. Several employees from H-E-B Grocery Co. headquarters were transported to University Hospital on Oct. 15, when a worker became ill after handling a package with a powdery substance.

Those costs won't be borne by the public; and hospital spokeswoman Leni Kirkman said the hospital has billed the company for the care provided to its em-

ployees.

Several workers at a Kerrville post office also were tested for anthrax exposure and given antibiotics Tuesday after they were exposed to a powdered substance. Postal Inspector Doug Turner didn't know who would foot that bill.

An individual seeking treatment on his own could face substantial costs. The health department is telling local doctors to test patients by sending nasal swabs to a private medical laboratory, not the health department.

Labs do only a preliminary microbiology culture on the nasal swabs, said Pam Sherry, spokeswoman for Burlington, N.C.-based Laboratory Corp. The cost of that to a patient is about \$78, according to the corporation's local office. The price to a health insurance company could be different.

*ctumiel@express-news.net
Staff Writers Elaine Aradillas
and Bill Hendricks contributed to this report.*



Express News

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DATE 26 Oct 01

AETC
BASES

News Clips

Compiled by AETC Public Affairs

Christmas Parade events announced

LINDA S. JOHNSON

Staff Writer

Normally the annual Christmas parade starts at Greenwood and Griner Streets, turns right on Garfield Avenue to South Main Street, turns right again and proceeds to the Whitehead Memorial Museum.

This year's parade, Dec. 8, will start at Ogden and South Main streets, at 6:45 p.m., and proceed to the Whitehead Memorial Museum.

Del Rio Beautification Foundation Christmas Parade Chairperson Ida Gutierrez said, "We have several changes from the ordinary with this year's Christmas parade and the festivities that precede it."

Starting at 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 8, entertainment groups from around Del Rio join The Upstagers musical director Robert Wade and associate Hector Flores in putting together a "Del Rio Christmas Gala." The gala will be held in the gazebo in Greenwood Park. Wade said, "We are trying to get the city to loan us the portable staging they have so we can have a larger area on which to perform." He added that he felt the audience would enjoy the performance if it were more visible. "Audience participation is very important to everyone's enjoyment."

"The gala should last about 45 minutes and set the mood

for the mayor to light the traditional Christmas tree at 6 p.m.," Wade said. "We are trying to put together a variety of holiday numbers and, hopefully, it will also be a little different than the traditional stuff we're used to hearing." Wade and Flores will act as masters of ceremonies for the gala.

Wade said he's asking the Laughlin Air Force Base Honor Guard to present the colors. He is also trying to get one of the officers to address the public concerning the families who are waiting for their loved ones to return after serving in the war.

"Other changes that are sure to please the parade watchers are the addition of bleachers and master of ceremonies," Gutierrez said. "Jim Bush has agreed to present the floats and narrate the parade much like they do with the Macy's parade." The positioning of the bleachers on Main Street has not been determined but will be announced at a later date.

"Of course we will have Santa Claus in the parade, but with a difference," said Gutierrez.

"Normally, Santa rides in the parade in a firetruck, but this year he is going to ride in a buggy." She said the buggy and burro will be furnished by Oscar San Miguel.

"We are going to finish the parade at the museum with Santa handing out goodie bags to the children," Gutierrez said.

"Once the last parade entry passes the children on the street they are then invited to follow the parade to the museum."

Gutierrez said the reasons for the changes are that in previous years the fruit had spilled out of the goodie bags into the street.

"This way the children will not only get a full goodie bag but will have a chance to talk to Santa," said Gutierrez.

To top off all the new changes, Gutierrez announced that Texas Teacher for the Year 2001-2002, Marta Galindo, will be the 2001 Christmas Parade Grand Marshal.

If you would like to enter a float or marching group in the Christmas parade, contact Gutierrez at 830-774-6547.

LAUGHLIN AFB, TX

DEL RIO NEWS HERALD

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Sun Cities Independent

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Support Luke

I, among many, get the warm fuzzies when I see the F-16s and do not have the privilege of using the PX. The residents who have the privilege of using the PX have earned it the hard way.

.....

I would like to congratulate the person who submitted the Speak Out item, "Different Tune" in the Oct. 10-16 newspaper. They were so right about people who complain about the jets from Luke. We should be so thankful every day we can see and hear those jets flying over. I think they have lost sight of the reason we are free; many young men and women died for us. So each time they think about complaining, just thank God they are able to enjoy the freedoms we have. So to have these freedoms we have to stand united — not a few but all.

.....

I have a suggestion for the caller who wants to move Luke 300 miles from here: He should move 300 miles from here. It would be a lot cheaper and we would get rid of a complainer.

Surprise Independent

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Luke AFB is vital to the community

Once again, a nameless example of pure ignorance appeared in the Surprise Independent Oct. 17-23, 2001 opinions column. The same person who, prior to this phone message, submitted a letter that was also printed, on the same subject, virtually verbatim. I have to tell you that your recent submissions are beginning to reveal the fragile faculties you possess. Are you even supposed to be reading our paper? Are you sure you are on the right side of the tracks? What you refer to as "wrapping the flag around yourselves and your brain" is what most Americans call embracing that which has, and will always be symbolic of the freedoms and sacrifices made at all levels to get this country to where it is, not just militarily! Especially during these trying times.

Since you present yourself as having access to Luke Air Force Base's safety record and a supreme logistician, I have a few questions I would like you to answer. What terrible safety record, are you referring to, when you make reference to "Luke's terrible safety record?" You also make reference to an ideal location to accommodate Luke AFB and all of its operations — the Barry Goldwater Range. If you think the range is such a perfect location, move there.

You need to remove your blinders and realize that Luke AFB is vital to you being allowed to have your rhetoric printed in this paper, which probably isn't distributed where you live. Secondly, what will your issues be in the future, when space that was once

viewed as "ideal," by you, for military installations is encroached by population? I know, move it to a foreign country right? Have no bases in the states, right? Those walls around your house are not shields. They are only there to give you a false sense of security. The military is your shield, and provides a real and tangible security.

You are a rare breed of American, to have witnessed the tragedies of Sept. 11 and be unaffected. Right now, it is not about Luke AFB, your phobias or the public's opinion of the fate of Luke AFB. Our country is still reeling from those traumatic events in September. Wake up and read your own community paper.

CURT CAVAZOS
SURPRISE

4-H Awards Dinner held Monday night

ALEJANDRA VALDEZ

Staff Writer

The 4-H Awards Dinner was held Monday night to recognize the accomplishments of the members and their projects.

Guest speaker was Bobby Barrera, director of the Family Support Center at Laughlin Air Force Base.

An introduction of the Val Verde Senior, Comstock Junior and Del Rio Junior officers was made as the members were presented with officer pins. During the ceremony, Kaytee Collins recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Creed. Lindsey Wharton presented the 4-H motto, pledge, slogan and emblem.

Among the many awards presented was the "Friend of the 4-H Award" for 2001. Jerry Simptons' Border Boers was the business chosen as recipient of the award. The recipient is selected by the 4-H members based on involvement and support. Simpton was selected for his involvement with goat projects and helping during the Val Verde County Jr. Livestock Show.

The "Outstanding Adult Leader Award" was presented to Candy Bynum for her involvement as a project leader and chairman of the group's fund-raiser.

Sarah West, the 16-year-old daughter of Ira and Becky West, was chosen for 4-H Sweetheart.

The highest award 4-H bestows to a member of is the "Gold Star Award." Criteria was met by Kourtney Wardlaw and Sarah West. Wardlaw and West have each been members for eight years. Wardlaw is the Senior Officer of the club and West is a member of the State

and National Champion 4-H Wool Judging team.

District Six Group Leader Awards were presented to Candy Bynum and Jack Henson.

Awards were presented for

Clothing Project to Cory Clark and Cheyanne Sellers. In the Dog Project, awards went to Hope Bynum, Rebecca Gomez, Jacob Herrera, Tess O'Brien, Marquessa Powers and Lindsay Wharton. Food and Nutrition Project awards were given to Rory Aguero, Cassie Allen, Laura Allen, Cheyanne Sellers, Colton Sellers and Lindsay Wharton. Horse Project awards went to Hope

Melissa Jesurun, Carlos Martinez, Cassidy Perry and Stephanie Scheller. Rabbit Project awards went to Jessica Hardin, Jacquelyn Rogers, David Scott and Cheyanne Sellers. Rodeo awards went to Jessica Baker and Chelsea Lewis. Sheep Project awards went to Laura Allen, Houston

Dobbins, Katelyn Edwards, Will Edwards, Craig Leonard and Johnna Wardlaw. Goat Project awards were presented to Zachary Bynum, Mary Ruth McKaskle, Lockett Murdoch, Tana Nettleton, Mark Scheller and Charlotte Taylor. Shooting Sports Project awards went to Corie Clark, Franklin Hargrove, Katelyn Hargrove, William Heilner, Charles Riley and Andrew Sutherland. High Point Shooter was Susan Jayroe. Wool and Mohair Judging awards were given to Laura Allen, Houston Dobbins, Kelly Hurley, Craig Leonard, Savannah Leonard and Mary Ruth McKaskle.

In the Wool and Mohair Judging Team presentation, Bill Zuberbueller called 4-Hers Quisto Settle, Chase Settle, Cassie Allen and Sarah West to the front and the group received a standing ovation for their performance at the State Wool Judging Contest in July 2001, where the team came in first place, then received first place again a week later at the National Wool Judging Competition. Once a team reaches first place in both the state and national competitions, they are retired from competing, explained a proud parent.

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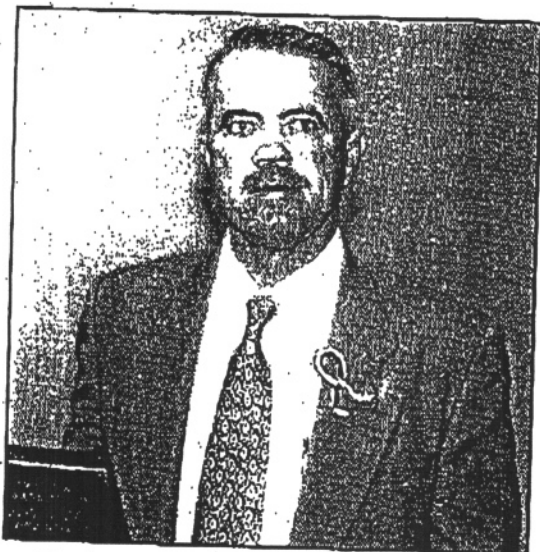
LAUGHLIN AFB, TX

DEL RIO NEWS HERALD

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4-H (head, heart, hands and heart) clubs promote clear thinking, loyalty, service and healthy living. Students ages nine through 19 and in school are eligible for membership and parents are encouraged to be 4-H volunteers.

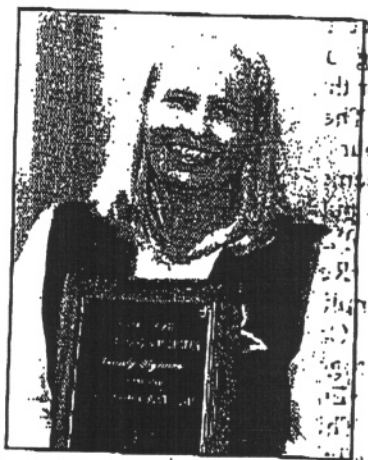
For enrollment or other 4-H information, call the Texas Agriculture Extension Service Center at 774-7591.



JERRY SIMPTON



SARAH WEST



Candy Bynum

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LAUGHLIN AFB, TX
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Contamination found at Cove Gardens site

KEVIN PORTER
THE NEWS HERALD

Panama City's purchase of the former military housing area of Cove Gardens is now scheduled for the middle of 2002 after environmental studies found a small contaminated area on the property.

"We don't want to scare anybody," said John Sabochick, a civil engineer for Tyndall Air Force Base. "It's a very small area."

The area contains the chemi-

cal heptachlorepoide; which is commonly found in pesticides. The Air Force will do additional testing to delineate the contaminated area, then have it cleaned up.

"I don't know the exact size, but it's minor (in comparison) to the 33-acre property," Sabochick said.

Once the cleanup is finished, top Air Force officials will need to deem the property along Watson Bayou suitable for transfer. That could take up to four months.



Afterward, negotiations for a sale price will begin with city officials. Sabochick thinks the negotiations will commence in

See **CONTAMINATION**, page 2B

CONTAMINATION: Process is lengthy

From page 1B

early April.

"We realize this is a very lengthy process," he said. "We want to make sure everything is done right."

The Air Force decided several years back that it was no longer going to use Cove Gardens to house its servicemen and women. Officials want to use the money from the sale of the property to construct additional housing on Tyndall.

Congress passed legislation in 1999 permitting the 33-acre parcel to be conveyed to the city for a fair-market price.

The city will likely enter into a three-party agreement — that is, sell the property to a private concern — so no taxpayer money is spent on the exchange.

However, the city's involvement means it can put restrictions on development of the property.

Rumors about the final development have ranged all the way from high-rise condominiums to low-income housing.

Mayor Gerry Clemons said that whatever goes up will be compatible with the residential area that surrounds Cove

Gardens.

"I think what we are going to do is hold a public hearing and try and get input," Clemons said. "We'll see what (the public) thinks should be possible uses for the property."

One concern Clemons has is keeping the oaks on the property. He said low-rise condominiums might be the best way to meet that goal because they would use less ground.

Cove Gardens was constructed in the early 1940s and renovated in the 1980s. The 130 one-, two- and three-bedroom residences have been unoccupied since February.

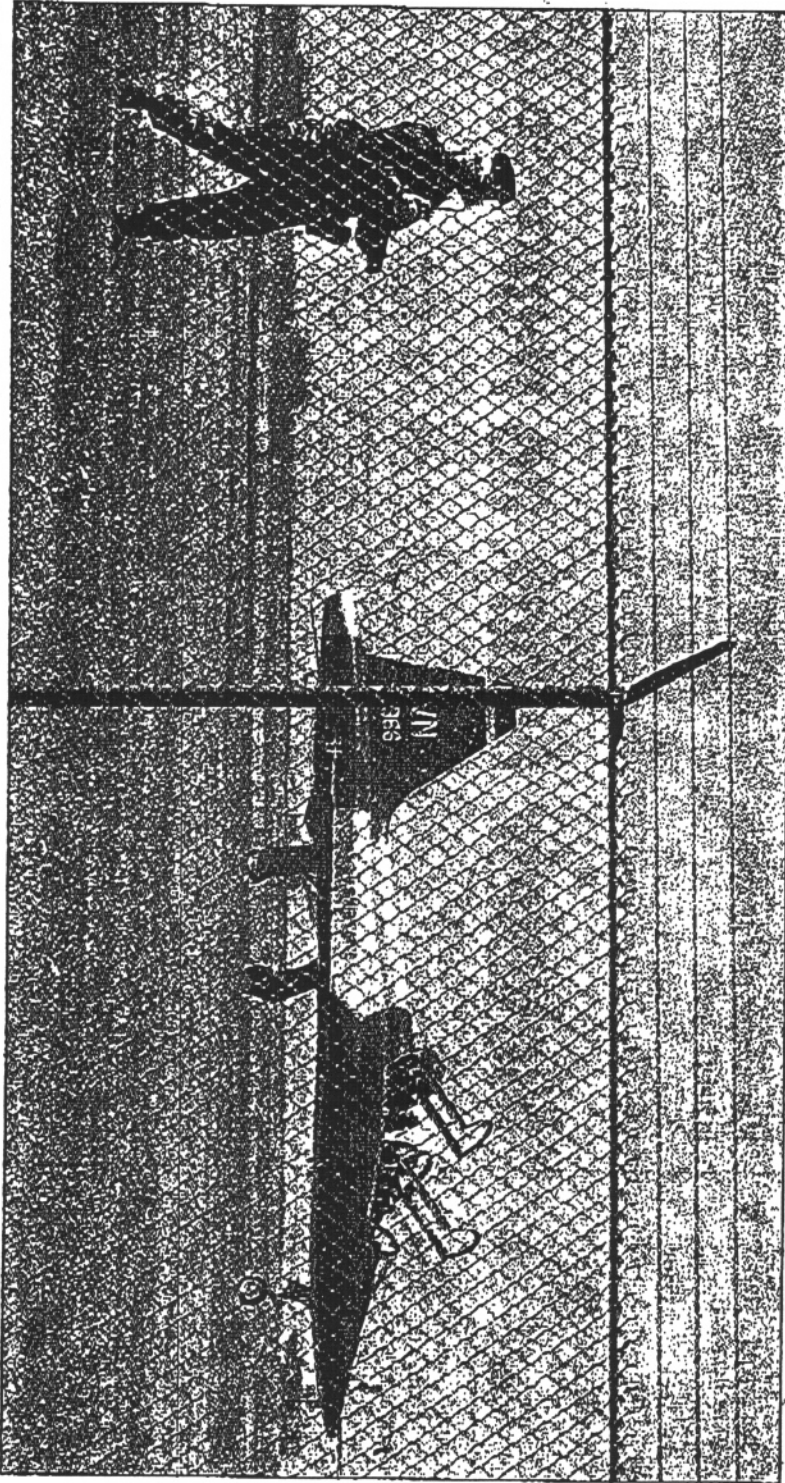
A gate on Third Court blocks access to the area. The property is watched to keep vagrants away.

An Army Corps of Engineers appraisal earlier this year valued the property at \$6.8 million. The figure will likely come down because of the contaminated area.

Clemons said he doesn't believe the property is worth half of the \$6.8 million estimate.

"The land is worth what it's worth," Clemons said. "We'll put out (a request for proposals) to developers and see what we get."

FOOT SOLDIER



An Air Force security officer patrols the perimeter of Vance Air Force Base Wednesday afternoon as a T-38 rolls down the taxiway for a training flight. Security at Vance has been heightened since the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., to include armed foot patrol. (Staff Photo by CHRIS LANDSBERGER)

VANCE AFB OK

The Enid News & Eagle, October 19, 2001

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22.

Where were the patriots?

The country has lost over 6,000 lives in a terrorist attack in New York, more than 160 at the Pentagon, and others on hijacked aircraft. Now we are waging war, and this one is not just "overseas." In the face of impending actions, while feeling anger and contemplating revenge, now we feel the urge to display the colors of our country. Now we show our patriotism to the rest of the world. No, there's nothing wrong with standing proud and tall, waving the flag, singing our national anthem and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Then, what is wrong? Where were these "patriots" for the last 10 years? Not since Desert Storm has the country come together with such a show of unity. Unfortunate, isn't it, that it took something like this to shake us to the very foundations of our country's existence in the first place? Isn't it strange that only now we step back and become patriots again, sing our anthem and pledge allegiance to our country and the ideals for which it stands. Patriots, where were you? Now our military is poised to defend us; to revenge those lost lives; to stamp out terrorism. Now they are heroes again and not the war mongers as they are sometimes seen. No, again, our sons and daughters prepare to defend freedom in a strange far off place. Now, again, patriots come forward to face the foe. And, while our military structure is sharpening its talons, our congressional leaders are voting on another round of base closures. I hope you'll each remember those patriots who voted "yes" in the next election. Hopefully, our ideals will strengthen our resolve to only accept complete success. And, when it's over this time, hopefully we won't have to say again in the future; "Patriots, where were you?"

Bob Farrell
Enid

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Enid, Vance team for training event

Enid and Vance Air Force Base will team up for a joint training exercise near the base Wednesday. Drive beginning at 8 a.m. and will last approximately four hours.

The exercise will test the response plans for a minor hazardous materials response, officials said.

It will be a well-planned but simulated scenario involving a truck carrying hazardous materials. Residents within the isolated exercise area may see a gathering of emergency vehicles from Vance and Enid responding to the simulated scene. The event will occur north of Vance on Pride

"This is an excellent opportunity for base and local authorities to work together and review one slice of our response plans."

— Col. Doug Raaberg

Enid and Vance response teams routinely work together on various exercise scenarios to test plans, ensure communications are linked and demonstrate to the public safety is a key concern.

"This is an excellent opportunity for base and local authorities to work together and review one slice of our response plans," said Col. Doug Raaberg, 71st Flying Training Wing commander.

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Vance, Enid pass test

By Robert Barron
Staff Writer

It was a mock situation, but it appeared like a car really had struck a truck carrying hazardous material on Fox Drive near Vance Air Force Base Wednesday morning.

The simulation was treated as the real thing, as Vance hazardous material teams worked with Enid firefighters in a joint training effort.

Col. Eli Garrett, 71st Support Group commander, said the exercise was a typical scenario, but this time was different because Vance personnel worked with Enid firefighters.

Garrett gave the exercise high marks and said the relationship between Vance and the community was excellent.

"It was a super exhibition of cooperation between the two communities, Vance and

Enid," he said.

Vance first responders included fire and medical personnel. Depending on the scenario, Garrett said, Vance security troops also would respond to a disaster.

"We worked with the fire department and police department and initial response and kept the scene compacted," he said.

See DRILL, Page A3

DRILL

Continued from Page A1

Garrett is the first response commander and makes decisions concerning what teams are sent.

Enid Fire Department Chief Phil Clover said the exercise went well. He was glad to have Vance Fire Department working with city firefighters.

"I've worked with the Air Force before. They bring a lot of water and a lot of foam to a flammable liquid, hydrocarbon situation," Clover said. "Their training and

manpower are an asset to us."

"It was a super exhibition of cooperation between the two communities, Vance and Enid."

— Col. Eli Garrett

the Vance Fire Department out there," he said.

"The first response is important," Garrett said. "Getting there and treating injuries. We had a good report of what we hope to do. It was good because we were working together."

This was Garrett's first emergency simulation working with Enid responders.

Clover said Vance firefighters are highly trained and respected.

"You don't realize what an asset that is to have

Vance teams also worked on procedures determining how they deal with casualties. Garrett said the drills are held so responders can practice working together as a team and find places where their procedures can be improved.

"The reason we do it is to see how well our procedures work, or if there is some place we can tweak it and make it better," Garrett said.

The same Vance personnel will respond to any type of hazardous incident, whether it is an accident or a terrorist attack, he said. Their job is to contain, isolate and clear the area to prevent any further injuries. Depending on the type of incident, security forces also may be sent, he said.

Once the area is contained and controlled, the team forms a support group and briefs Garrett on the situation. The team also works with the Enid fire chief to provide the best support for the city's units.

During Wednesday's exercise, a mobile command post was established at the site on Fox Drive.

The procedures would be the same for a biological disaster, Garrett said. Vance teams are trained to respond to such incidents.

Garrett, who has an extensive career in the Air Force, said Wednesday's drill was excellent.

"It was more than just the Air Force, but the civilian community as well. It's not surprising, there's always been close cooperation between the two communities," said Garrett.

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JUST A DRILL



Enid firefighters carry away a dummy as a mock victim from a simulated accident scene involving a car and semi loaded with anhydrous ammonia Wednesday afternoon. Enid and Vance Air Force Base emergency crews conducted the exercise to help train for accidents involving hazardous materials. (Staff Photo by CHRIS LANDSBERGER)

Task force seeks funds to ensure bases' survival

By Scott Cooper
Staff Writer

Members of a task force set up to ensure Oklahoma keeps its military bases said Wednesday they need funding as soon as possible and plan to ask the governor for a special session on the matter.

Member, "Ivan, the money mainly for training the next generation of base employees

and for hiring lobbyists to plead the state's case in Washington against any base closings.

The Oklahoma Military Base Closure Prevention Task Force met Wednesday to discuss proposals and assess the needs of each of the state's major military installations. With Congress considering another

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Bases: Primary focus is on preventing closures

From Page 1-A

round of base closings, legislators and community leaders say Oklahoma could lose out if action isn't immediately taken.

Enid businessman and committee member Bob Berry predicted the next state legislative session will be the last before Congress draws up a list of bases to be closed.

"You can go to the bank on that," Berry said. Created by House Bill 1200 during the last session, the task force's goal is to come up with ways to keep Oklahoma's military facilities and, failing that, design alternative usages for closed bases.

The primary focus is on prevention, which is why Rep. David Bradstock-Delams, the committee chairman, would like the funding to be con-

sidered in a special session. "I think it's important enough," Bradstock said. "It could be in the current one or one just for this."

The Legislature recessed from its special session Tuesday, but has yet to adjourn.

Officials in Gov. Frank Keating's office said the governor would consider the matter if asked, but he is not likely to add the issue to the special session under way.

"Obviously the governor is always willing to listen, but at this time he's not willing to open the Rainy Day Fund," said Dan Mahoney, communications director for Keating. "He's been pretty adamant about not dipping into the Rainy Day Fund until the regular session."

Mahoney said the money needed by the task force would probably come from that fund. Keating is in Washington and could not be reached for comment.

All of Oklahoma's five major military installations face an aging work force.

Almost all of the installations report about 50 percent of their work force will retire in the next five to 10 years. The concern was so great

at Tinker Air Force Base that a program was developed there to bring in high school and vocational students and teach them skills for potential jobs at Tinker.

If a program the task force would like to implement at all installations:

"We've got to do a better job to make aware to students sooner what types of jobs are available," said Sid Hudson, vice chancellor for system advancement economic development with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Hudson estimated it would cost \$2.75 million for a statewide training program, with telecommunications as a major component.

Bradstock estimated it would cost another \$2 million for other base-closing prevention methods, including hiring consultants and lobbyists.

At Fort Sill in Lawton, a group called Cannon Cockers formed four years ago for such a purpose. Each member contributes \$1,000 toward the cost of a Washington lobbyist.

Other needs include maintenance upgrades at Fort Sill and community infrastructure improvements at Vance Air Force Base in Enid.

VANCE AFB OK

The Daily Oklahoman, October 25, 2001

Inhofe, Watts weigh in against base closures

By Chris Casteel

Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Despite pressure from the Bush administration for more military base closures, Sen. Jim Inhofe and Rep. J.C. Watts said Wednesday they are hoping to use their positions on a key committee to help defeat a proposal for another round in 2003.

Watts, R-Norman, and Inhofe, R-Tulsa, said they expect a House-Senate committee writing a final version of defense legislation to take up the matter today or Friday. The Oklahoma lawmakers are on the committee. Both oppose another round of closures.

The Senate and House have taken conflicting positions on the issue that will have to be resolved. The Senate narrowly approved a proposal authorizing another round in 2003, but the House defense bill was silent on the matter.

"Where we end up, I don't know," Watts said.

Inhofe said he is hoping the Senate's sharp division on the matter and the House's previous opposition will strengthen the hand of those trying to keep base closures out of the final defense bill. Though he is technically obligated to represent the Senate's position, Inhofe won't hesitate to speak against it, he said.

Watts, who has three major military bases in his district, said Vice President Dick Cheney asked about base closures during a meeting Tuesday with House Republican leaders. Watts told the vice president — a former defense secretary — there would be a lot of resistance from House members to another round.

"I told him I felt the House members were pretty adamant. ... We have made our thoughts known to the Senate (committee members) that we're opposed."

Watts acknowledged that, with the country fighting overseas, some lawmakers may be feeling more pressure to go along with base closures because the Pentagon and White House are arguing they need to be able to spend limited resources according to their needs.

"We'll give them the opportunity to make that argument," Watts said. "But you can also make a very strong argument to say, 'How much money are you going to save?'"

Many opponents of base closures say the up-front costs of closing bases negate any savings and wind up actually diverting resources from

readiness and modernization.

Supporters, however, say the Pentagon shouldn't be spending time and money on bases that have been obsolete for a long time.

Watts and Inhofe said their strong opposition to more rounds of closures doesn't mean they're nervous about any of Oklahoma's installations. The state has major Air Force bases in Altus, Oklahoma City and Enid and a massive Army artillery base in Lawton.

All the Oklahoma bases have gotten high marks in previous rounds of closures. But a lot of quality bases will be scrutinized simply because the most obvious ones were shut down.

The last round was in 1995, and it soured many on the whole process when President Clinton tried to save jobs in Texas and California at bases that were on the closure list.

Even though there is a new administration, some "fence-mending efforts" still must be done on Capitol Hill to convince lawmakers that the base-closing process can be done without political intervention, Watts said.